

Journal

Office of Legislative Counsel

Friday - 15 January 1954

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1. In conversation with Robert Smart, Chief Clerk of the House Armed Services Committee (and a Committee staff man since 1946), he indicated that this would not be a good year to bring up CIA legislation, a) because of the general difficulties of the Congressional program in an election year, and b) because of an undertow of questions regarding CIA, not all of them hostile, but at least indicating a desire to know more about CIA. It might be difficult to turn aside such questions if legislative requirements were put forward. Mr. Smart volunteered his opinion that the Armed Services Committee, through a specially and highly selected subcommittee, might be an appropriate group to look at CIA, and he made the point that no one at present could properly answer any questions about the Agency or come to our defense. Mr. Smart stated "I don't have to tell you that the best defense is a good offense, and it might be very wise for Mr. Dulles to say to the Chairman at their luncheon that he would welcome any look which the Committee might wish to make." Mr. Smart thought that the best approach would be to have the Chairman appoint a three or five man subcommittee, preferably consisting of the Chairman, Mr. Vinson and Mr. Cole, and with appropriate security safeguards.

2. Chairman Dewey Short, of the House Armed Services Committee, has accepted our invitation to lunch on 25 January. This is a change of schedule as Cong. McCormack will not be available on that date. Discreet inquiry is being made as to whether Chairman Short wishes to come alone or would welcome having Cong. Vinson at the luncheon.

CRC, 3/24/2003